

Statement by the Head of the Observer Delegation of
Brazil,
Ambassador Isabel Cristina de Azevedo Heyvaert, at the
African Regional Preparatory Conference for the
United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
(Rio+20)

H.Excellencies, Ministries of African States,
H.E. Mr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of African Union,
H.E. Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, UN Under Secretary General and
Executive Secretary of UNECA
H.E. Ms. Amina Mohamed, Deputy Executive Director of
UNEP,
Dear Representatives from AFDB and UNDP, Guests,

Ladies and Gentleman,

I am honored to represent the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, Ambassador Antonio Patriota, who regrets not having been able to be present here, in response to your kind invitation.

2. The main objectives of Rio+20 is to renew the political commitment to the sustainable development - through the evaluation of progress and gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development - and, the treatment of new and emerging challenges. The two main themes of the Conference, in accordance with the Resolution 64/236, are the "green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" and "The Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development".

3. Brazil believes that multilateralism is the best way to engage the international community towards solutions for the major global challenges. Built on the achievements of Rio-92, Rio+20 has the potential to determine the sustainable development agenda for the next

twenty years. In fact, the Conference will address issues of global reach, inviting the reevaluation of the current model of development and its revision for a better sustainable future.

4. Rio+20 will be a conference on development, focusing on the fight against poverty, henceforth being fundamental the engagement of the developing countries in the preparatory process, as the one that is taking place here, since last Thursday. Our governments ought to express their priority to the eradication of extreme poverty, under the aegis of sustainable development and of the Rio Principles. It is important that developing countries be an active part in the negotiations that will follow the presentation of the Zero Draft of the Rio+20 outcome document, in January 2012.

5. Resolution 64/236 establishes that "green economy" should be considered in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. This means that the issue should be considered in a balanced way regarding the three pillars of sustainable development, or, as some prefer, "a helix approach", but always taking into consideration the economic and social development and environmental protection.

6. Developing countries have insisted that green economy be considered as one of the possible instruments for sustainable development, without replacing the paradigm established in 1992. Although it is possible to share best practices and national policies to promote the green economy, each country must develop its own model, in the respect of their national realities.

7. Despite concerns about the lack of definition of green economy, our countries should also be aware of the opportunities, that may arise. The redefinition of existing economic models, according to social and environmental objectives, has the potential to generate new opportunities for economic growth, employment and income generation, as well as for the development of new

technologies. Green economy, for Brazil, should contribute to the strengthening and implementation of sustainable development programs, providing new complementarities and synergies between existing and new initiatives.

Ladies and gentlemen,

8. Greater international efforts for technology transfer and technical cooperation are necessary to ensure that the benefits of a green economy have effective global impact. In this context, among other alternatives, it should be highlighted the proposal to establish a clearing house aimed at disseminating successful experiences and best practices in green economy. For Brazil, such an initiative should also contemplate the means for the provision of timely and adequate resources for adapting and replicating innovative experiences. Our experience with South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as our close relations with African countries, may give rise to new opportunities for development cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

9. Brazil is willing to be an example and to continue to be a partner of Africa, in the framework of the balanced approach among economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development. We have achieved notable progress towards it and hope to contribute to the discussions of Rio+20, based on these experiences. Our economy has grown 7.5% in 2010; inflation is under control and budget adjustments have contributed to the increase in primary surplus.

10. In the social area, Brazil has brought out of poverty 28 million people in recent years. Poverty decreased by 52% between 2002 and 2009. To improve the conditions of 16 million Brazilians, who still live in extreme poverty, the Brazilian government launched, this year, three programs which improve and enhance our social policies.

The first one, "Brazil Without Extreme Poverty", includes income transfer; actions to ensure access to public services, such as education, health, sanitation and electricity, as well as social inclusion, both in urban and rural areas.

11. The second one is the "Bolsa Verde", an income transfer program, inspired in "Bolsa Família". Families who dwell or work in national forests and extractive reserves are compensated for their conservation and for fighting illegal logging. The third one is the Low-Carbon Agriculture Program which finances, at low interest rates, producers who adopt sustainable development practices.

12. Brazil has one of the cleanest energy matrixes in the world. Approximately, 45% of its energy needs are from renewable sources. Our experience with bio-fuels is of particular relevance, since we have proven that the production of bio-fuels may be compatible with food production and, in many cases, may serve to improve food security by increasing income. Our technical cooperation with the African countries in these areas is already remarkable, and we intend to further expand and improve it.

Ladies and gentlemen,

13. My country believes in multilateralism and has confidence that Rio+20 will improve the coordination of the UN system institutions concerned with sustainable development. Brazil also believes that it is essential that a renewed institutional framework for sustainable development reiterates the priority of fighting poverty. Among the proposals in this regard, ECOSOC ought to be reformed to explicitly accommodate the environmental dimension in its mandate.

14. In our view, discussions related to environmental governance should prioritize solutions that lead to the strengthening of UNEP's implementation capacity in

developing countries, without, necessarily, promoting changes in its institutional format. In this sense, it is important that UNEP is provided with timely and predictable resources, to enable it to comply with its mandate.

Ladies and gentlemen,

15. The Declaration adopted by the Regional Preparatory Meeting of Latin American and Caribbean countries, convened last September, in Chile, already reflects that Rio+20 will be a conference about development, focused particularly on poverty eradication.

16. In that sense, and as a conclusion, I wish to reiterate that Brazil, as host and President of Rio+20 and also as a developing country, attributes special value to this African preparatory meeting, since it represents a unique opportunity to place poverty eradication at the top of priorities in your national submissions, which will be forwarded to the United Nations Secretariat, by 1st November.

Thank you.